

## Missionary Correspondence.

### A TRIP TO SWAZILAND.

Dr. H. C. Sanders.

Dr. Sanders' account of his trip to Swaziland is long but very interesting, read it.

Paulpietersburg, Natal, June 28, 1913.

Dear Highway:—

I have just returned from a trip through Swaziland, where all the missionaries have large fields of labor that do not overlap. Here seven men and twice as many women have before them an area as large as all of New Brunswick. Of course the native preachers and teachers help, but, as yet, Swaziland comes in the list of "insufficiently occupied" mission fields.

Bro. Kierstead joined me at Balmoral Tuesday the 10th, and the day following we went to a store across the Pongolo near where Samuel preaches. Our road lay over the roughest of country, where we sometimes had to dismount and lead our horses. Just before reaching the Pongolo river, where Samuel lives, the descent is very steep for about a mile. This brought us to the river valley, lying between great hills on either side, like low mountain ranges. This place, though unhealthy, is liked by the natives for its great fertility. The grass stood very high, reaching above our heads as we rode along while the gardens showed tremendous cornstalks and pumpkins like those grown in our most strongly fertilized gardens on Balmoral.

Samuel being across the river, his little nephew, Elijah, (whose smaller brother is Elisha, and whose father is Abraham) acted as our guide in crossing. Four or five other boys, varying from seven years to ten, followed for the sake of the fascination they found in seeing real horses. All the way along they were shouting to each other as they ran, commenting on the strength, beauty, fleetness, etc., of the horses. The long tails and manes came in for a good share of admiration. They seemed to think, too, that these animals were likely to kick and bite. And yet they all, boy-like, concluded it would be a great and glorious thing to ride. Horse sickness prevents the natives from keeping horses.

There was only one place we might get past the barbed wire fence that stretches for many miles along the border between Natal and the Transvaal. This testifies to the strenuous efforts put forth by the Natal Government eight years ago, when, at the outbreak of the cattle sickness, "tick fever." This fence was built at great expense, cattle were bought and shot on the infected farms and many men, hired as "border guards." But all this to little or no avail as all such methods are now abandoned for the dipping tanks, which are successfully controlling the spread of this disease.

Our young guides led us down into a deep gully where we could pass under the fence. We felt much relieved when we were really on the other side as there seemed some confusion in their minds as to where we should get past. One fellow informed the others that we intended having the horses jump over the fence.

After wandering about in various directions, retracing our steps for quite a distance, and much shouting of conflicting opinions, we were, as stated, conducted in triumph through the "pass."

The fording of the river was now the sub-

ject of discussion among the young guides. It did not take them long to undress and get started. The water they considered cold, but bravely pushed on while the swift current reached almost their waist line. We held our feet high as the horses stumbled through among the large slippery rocks.

Then began a climb of several miles, but mostly not very steep. Our boys were now thanked and told they were at liberty to return. But they elected to go on fearing, as they said, we might take a wrong road. The sun was near setting so they concluded to accompany us to a certain kraal where they would spend the night, and return to their home next day. I suspected it was the horses that attracted them so strongly and, while walking up a steep hill, invited one little fellow to ride. Then all three had a turn and will, I presume, never forget those glorious few moments when they were actually riding a horse.

Just after sundown we overtook Aaron and another young man, who were carrying our blankets and food. We did not need either that night, however, as Mr. Hart, the storekeeper gave us a good supper and beds. This man has been long in the country as trader among the natives. Once in Zululand he was down with malaria fever and alone. He thinks he would have died but for the help of a missionary, Mr. Feyling, of the S. A. G. Mission, whose station was just across Lake St. Lucia from his store. This good Samaritan heard of Mr Hart's sorry plight and came over with drugs and food. He remained and nursed his patient day and night until he was better, then took him across to the station where he recovered completely. Mr. Hart told us the particulars of the sad end of Mr. Feyling's brother who met his death at this lake twelve years ago. He was a missionary who had been in the country some time, and had his mission house finished. Mr. Hart was the last white man who ever saw him alive. The young missionary said in joke as he left, "Be sure and have that wedding present ready when I return tomorrow." He was to start next day for Durban to marry a Miss Torson who, at that time was studying the Zulu language with us in Durban. Instead of his coming the awful news was brought her that he had been killed by a crocodile. He was horribly mangled, probably fought desperately for life, as both hands were gone. He lived from the time of the encounter, six in the evening, until discovered on the bank of the lake eighteen hours after.

The next morning, while Brother Kierstead went up river, I went down to Kiepvaal gold mine. All the way along the native kraals are thickly scattered. Here is a comparatively needy area, though all might attend services and hear the gospel if their desire was strong enough. No white missionaries come here, but native workers have outposts here and there from three to eight miles apart. An energetic European could hasten the spread of Christianity here, or, if left as it is, the area will, in say ten years, be evangelized. This is our most promising region that can be worked from Balmoral. Some of these heathen asked us to come and settle among them and be their "umfundesi," teacher. A few who are members of other denominations said they wished us to work here so they might join us, as they find it difficult to raise the money their church requires of them—"quarterly dues."

At Klepvaal mine I found a Mr. Lee in charge who entertained me royally giving me my choice of wine, brandy or soda water. A

young Jew is running a store for the natives. Another Jew is prospecting for gold, on his own account. But these two "mess" with the mine crew and have an Indian cook, who knows his business. At the evening dinner Goldstein, the prospector Jew, told of the times he "might have" made his fortune. Once in Johannesburg, before gold was discovered there in quantities, "stands," building lots sold for five dollars each. Then after a time, the price rose to fifteen dollars, while to-day they are worth several thousand. Then he had claims staked out, but let them go, not seeing his mistake until it was too late. But yet the gold fever burns within his breast and hope is bright that he will some day find something as good or better than Johannesburg gold mines.

Mr. Lee came from England to the mines of Equatorial West Africa. Wages are high but men scarce. With malarial fever, quinine, rum and the lowest of morals, men soon either leave the place or die. Mr. Lee, however, is a very well informed, and highly intelligent man, who being prospector as well as engineer and mine manager, hopes to have and run a gold mine all his own some day. Among the mine hands are English, Scotch, French, Irish, Welsh, Australian, Canadian, etc., etc.—at Klipvaal, I mean. It seems that in prospecting and mining the ends of the earth meet.

The next, the third day from home, Brother Kierstead and I met at the store and spent the night. So much had happened that Saturday morning we thought it Sunday for a time and planned our services for the day among the natives near the store. But after getting our true reckoning we ceased to wonder at Mr. Hart opening his store and selling to the natives, and prepared to push on towards Swaziland, thirty-six miles to Pietsetief and we must make it or sleep cold, as our boys with the blankets can not keep pace with the horses.

Halfway, we got off our saddles for lunch at a Christian native kraal. Even the heathen admit that the converted native is more hospitable to travellers, yes, and an Englishman, we met on the way, directed us here saying we would fare better than at a Boer farm house. When they learned that we were "abafundise," teachers, they were loud in their self congratulations, saying: "Here we were entertaining angels and not aware of it." My saddle cloth needed sewing and when I requested a native woman, Maria, to fix it she produced a nice twenty-dollar hand sewing machine. They set before us a bowl of "amase," sour milk, and gave us two spoons. Of course the one that did too much talking would not be likely to get his share. But the milk proved too sour for us to finish. After a prayer service we went on our way, leaving them matches, etc. The road proved to be a long one and we did not arrive until the moon had been our lantern for several weary hours.

A Norwegian missionary, Mr. Hjarm, gave us kind entertainments until we left on Monday. Tough but young he has been twice married. His wife told us of a terrible experience she had upon arriving in this country. She, with another single lady missionary were coming on in an ox wagon from Vryheid to Paulpietersburg when lightning struck the cart, killing the woman at her side and burning and stunning her. She suffered from left sided paralysis for several days until she says God healed her in answer to prayer.

They live in a very nice house built by Mr. Hjarm. The large church, sixty by one hundred feet, and two stories high is quite ideal